*'Let Your Light Shine'*

*(Matthew 5.v16)*

# Teaching and Learning Policy

**Approval Date: Autumn Term 2023**

**Review Date: Autumn Term 2024**

# OUR MISSION STATEMENT

## 'Let Your Light Shine'
### (Matthew 5.v16)

At St. Stephen's Church of England Primary School we are proud to be a Church School with a distinct Christian character and ethos. We promote a love of learning within a safe and secure environment, in which every child matters as a precious gift from God. We believe every child is unique, different and special.

Christian values and spirituality are at the heart of all aspects of school life. Our school's Christian ethos reflects mutual care and concern- where faith, love, hope and truth flourish. Our school is a place where children are able to establish and deepen their understanding of God through prayer and reflection in daily acts of Collective Worship and Religious Education.

We provide a creative and challenging curriculum in order to inspire and motivate our pupils. We want all our children to feel secure and happy, enabling them to reach their fullest potential. We believe that happy children learn well and we thrive on celebrating the achievements of all our pupils across all areas of learning.

We aim to create an environment where children develop the confidence to think for themselves; where pupil voice is at the heart of all decision making and where all children feel valued and respected.

Our school ethos is built on mutual tolerance and respect for all human beings, regardless of beliefs culture or race. Charity and caring for those in need is fundamental to our work in school. We are all children of God so we aim to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves.

We work in partnership with governors, families; the wider community and our local Parish Church to ensure everyone has a voice in achieving the best possible education for our children.

Ultimately we are committed to excellence for all and through a process of continual reflection and evaluation we ensure that standards are continually raised and improved.

# 'Let Your Light Shine'

*(Matthew 5.v16)*

*Our school motto encompasses all that we are about as a school.*

*'Let your light shine'*

*The motto incorporates three fundamental elements:*

*The light of the Gospel message of Jesus*

*The light of individual talents*

*The light of learning*

Why Teaching & Learning?
"The principle goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done."
Jean Piaget

POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE
The School aims and objectives guide the members of the School community towards achieving "excellence in education". The Christian ethos and values upon which the school was founded inform this policy. It is these foundations which will guide how we live, learn and educate at St. Stephen's CE Primary School and therefore they should be in evidence in all that we do. Teaching and learning will permeate all that we do in school. This policy will help ensure that we can deliver our aims for teaching and learning as set out on our Curriculum Policy.

RATIONALE
As a school we aim to:
1. empower teachers at St. Stephen's CE Primary School with an ideal model upon which lessons are planned in order to maximise learning
2. provide common criteria against which excellent teaching and learning practice can be celebrated and develop that which isn't, toward excellence
3. ensure a common high quality of experience for all students to help maximise each individual's potential, whilst supporting creativity and individuality within teaching and learning (teachers & students)
4. help spread and share all teaching and learning practice that is of an excellent standard
5. provide an insight into the review and development of current and future teaching and learning practice, which enables staff and students to remain stimulated and focussed.

NOTE:
Any work on Teaching & Learning, as functions of its complex nature, must take account of assessment, behaviour, learning support and equal opportunities. There are policies in place for those aspects of Teaching & Learning and their contents will not be duplicated in this policy. Please refer to those policies for all relevant information.

It is important at the outset to determine what constitutes good teaching and good learning. According to OfSTED outstanding teaching in lessons is when:

"…..ideas and skills are taught in an inspiring and highly effective way."

Quality Teaching:
- provides carefully structured activity matched sensitively to student needs
- gives students some responsibility for their work and independence
- develops well planned, prepared and paced lessons that maintain high levels of interaction with the class
- provides ample, challenging work stemming from expert knowledge of curriculum, how to teach it and how students learn
- maintains high levels of student involvement in tasks
- creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom through excellent relationships
- incorporates high levels of praise and encouragement
- uses a variety of approaches; strategies and techniques are well selected and time is used productively
- uses homework effectively; particularly to reinforce and extend what is learned in school, if not prepare for a new topic

According to Dewey, a distinguished researcher of learning:

"Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn. And the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking. Learning, naturally, results."

Quality Learning is:
- when students are captivated and enthused by what they are learning
- an active process – a product of doing rather than receiving
- linked to prior knowledge
- supported by both the teacher and other students, and takes the form of interaction, collaboration and teacher intervention
- collaborative through cooperation, dialogue and creating knowledge with others
- centred on the learners' responsibility for their own learning. They are able to exercise choice, develop goals, plan their approach and work independently.
- reflective and enables learners to monitor and review the learning

- where learners make considerably better progress than may be expected
- when students display a strong desire to contribute the effort and concentration required to match the teachers passion for learning

OUR MAIN AIM: TO MAXIMISE EVERY LEARNER'S POTENTIAL
In order to make this aim a reality, as well as implementing the 'Elements In Practice' (outlined below), <u>teachers at St. Stephen's CE Primary School should as a team of staff always</u>:

- Set high expectations of learners at school that clearly define the effort and behaviours that students should put into learning in lessons.
- Communicate optimism by using positive language and designing challenging tasks.
- Demonstrate a commitment to every learner's success, making him or her feel included, secure and valued.
- Create an environment where learners feel able to make mistakes and comfortable to learn from them, without feeling inadequate or foolish.
- Create opportunities for learners to develop personal qualities such as considerate behaviour and positive and tolerant attitudes that will enable them to contribute effectively to the community.
- Set high expectations of learners at home - engaging parents in their child's learning in partnership with the school. Parental involvement and support in the home is critically important.
- Provide a clear moral code as a basis of behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school that will enable them to be role models within the wider community.
- Create a 'high challenge-low stress' environment for learning in which students are relaxed, believe that they can learn (high self-esteem) and want to learn (motivated).
- Create opportunities for students to enjoy themselves or have fun: this is when students learn best, because their emotional state is fundamental to learning.

ELEMENTS IN PRACTICE

All lessons should contain the following elements listed below in some shape or form. They are the strategies formulated with staff as being most important to empower us to consistently deliver high quality lessons. In so doing we believe these elements are core to enable us to unlock a student's full potential and hence maximise their progress and level of attainment:

1. Learning Objectives are Identified & Shared

This needs to be a two step approach in which students are told not only the purpose of the lesson but also what the teacher expects in terms of outcomes from activity. There is a need to communicate why they are doing what they are doing and how it fits into the bigger picture of the subject or their wider learning across the curriculum.

This might be achieved through:
- the learning objectives being outlined to the students at or near to the beginning of each lesson.
- the students being clear about the learning objectives in terms of what they are expected to learn. Objectives should be phrased in terms of the stem:

'We are learning to …:
  a. know that … (for knowledge – factual information such as names of people or equipment, places, symbols, formulae etc.);
  b. understand how/why … (for understanding – concepts, reasons, effects, principles, processes etc.);
  c. develop / be able to … (for skills – using knowledge, applying techniques, analysing information etc.);
  d. develop / be aware of … (for attitudes and values – empathy, caring, sensitivity towards social issues, feelings, moral issues etc.);
  e. explore and refine strategies for … (creating, designing, hypothesising, exploring alternatives).

     • The students understand desired learning outcomes. You want to tell students what you expect from them as a high quality outcome of each lesson or part lesson and how they will be assessed on the work they are to do, create or produce? This will usually be done through

effective modelling of tasks and describing or showing different possible attainment levels students will produce.


## 2. Review Learning to Link And Consolidate

Review helps create links with previous learning. This helps build secure foundations for subsequent learning, so that learners can progressively develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, attitudes and values contained in the curriculum. An effective lesson should be organised into a sequence of distinct learning episodes with a beginning (teacher or student input), a middle (activity for students) and then a quick check for understanding before moving to the next episode – until the end of the lesson, at which there might be a longer review time (plenary). Students remember more from the beginning of a learning activity than they do from the middle. They also learn more from the end of the experience than they do from the middle. It follows that it is beneficial to create lots of beginnings and endings in a lesson. Review should be part of all beginnings and endings of all lessons and episodes, and therefore its effectiveness is important to learning.

This might be achieved through:
- previous learning being recapped by the teacher.
- students being involved in the recap of previous learning.
- recap of learning being done throughout the lesson in relation to learning objectives. Establishing what learners know, understand, can do, are aware of or have explored, correcting existing misconceptions where necessary.
- review of learning done toward the end of the lesson to consolidate learning and its retention (plenary).
- providing time for reviewing and reflecting upon the learning that has taken place, as well as how and why they have learned.


## 3. Variety of Learning Activity

The main activity episodes of lessons are critical in making learning an enjoyable and challenging experience. It should stimulate learning through matching teaching techniques and strategies to the range of learning styles and needs within your class, and indeed groups within that class, to engage

actively all students. Initially this should mean that you ensure that you use teaching techniques and strategies that will regularly facilitate the use of all the different learning styles, so as to maximise student's strengths, and develop relative weaknesses. Ultimately it should involve using student data and assessments to help design different tasks to meet individual student learning preferences. It should provide opportunities for students to show and develop their skills and abilities to work independently and collaboratively.

This might be achieved through:

- being confident, flexible, open-minded, willing to experiment and embrace change in terms of your own teaching style, and adapt appropriately.
- planning and delivering a range of activities that match the maturity of the learners and the material to be learned, reflect different learning preferences and involve high levels of time on task for 'making sense' of information. This may often be achieved by offering students choices and by negotiating learning strategies with students.
- using creativity and imagination, and the resources offered by new technology, to engage, enthuse, challenge and support learners, and reward their effort and achievement.
- engaging in a dialogue with students that centres on effective learning; what it looks like and how it can be developed.
- tasks set in a time context or that are 'time bonded'.
- the students being aware of the timing in the lesson and of the longer-term deadlines.
- activities set in a sequential order that promotes progression and complexity of learning.
- assessment having informed the decisions behind which activities are selected and how the students are grouped for them.
- students being involved in planning, developing and evaluating their own activity and learning experiences.
- • activities which are varied in order to access all learning styles and intelligences.
- the sequence of tasks that students are engaged in, allowing for appropriate variation in the pace of learning, and the level of challenge.

4. Differentiation to Enable All Learners to Succeed

Differentiation can be seen as an on-going process that is accommodating the needs of individual students in our school. It ensures that teaching allows most learners to make at least their expected progress in relation to their capability. It will also stretch the less able to work as close to their capability as possible and the gifted and talented way beyond. Differentiation is best achieved when based upon an informed review of the student's learning......therefore through a diagnostic and formative assessment procedure.

Differentiation within classes should therefore take account of your students' point scores  that each student has been set in the context of reaching their full potential. Other professional judgements through diagnostic and formative assessment may reshape your initial strategies over time, but this data should remain central to the differentiation you employ for your classes.

Modifications, adjustments and alterations can then be made in the following areas:-

> • learning tasks and activities
> • teaching and learning methodologies.

These modifications are made at the SHORT TERM PLANNING stage where the decisions about differentiation are informed by assessment.

This might be achieved:

a. by TASK:

Because students work in a variety of ways with their different strength and aptitudes, a range of tasks spanning the spectrum of abilities can be an effective way of differentiating.

b. by RESOURCE:

activities which involve resources available to extend the more able as well as support the low achiever. It means changing the resources by which students learn to meet their individual needs. A consideration of the following may be vital in preparation:-

- Layout, design, graphics and readability of the resource.
- Using pupil-friendly storage and retrieval systems that will facilitate independent approaches to learning.
- Training the pupils to use a variety of resources
- Reducing the dependence on whole class texts as a source for teaching.
- Variety of mediums i.e. bigger striking implements, marker pens and poster paper

c. by RESPONSE:

The response of the teacher / adult / fellow student is a form by which differentiation can be achieved. This is essential in cases where differentiation by outcome is planned as the teacher's written or spoken response will vary from student to student. Marking of a student's work is an important medium for differentiation by response.

d. by OUTCOME:

Students working on a common un-differentiated task will inevitably produce different outcomes to the task set, as long as the task is not too closed. These differentiated outcomes should be used primarily to assess and then inform our planning for differentiation in another way (task, resource, group, support).

e. by GROUP:

Differentiation by group is an important way to allow purposeful use of resources (including the other students in the group). Students could belong to semi-permanent groups within the larger teaching groups. The students will have a record of the groups to which they belong. The students need not necessarily be told how they are grouped other than there ought to be a mixed gender dimension to the groupings where appropriate, as per current school procedures on classroom seating arrangements.

f. by SUPPORT:

The different needs of the different students will inevitably mean that some students need greater support than others. There are a number of strategies that can provide that support. Using the skills of Learning Support Assistants in the classroom to create a positive environment for learning would most certainly be one if they are available.

These strategies adapt teaching to the potential and needs of each individual, from the gifted and talented to those with special educational

needs, and as a result create a culture of respect for others and their learning, whatever their gender, social background or ethnic group. We expect to see a number of these different forms of differentiation over a period of time.

5. Assessment used Formatively to Involve Students in their Learning

The key focus of assessment in teaching and learning must be to enable students to be continually aware of where they are now in their learning, where they can or need to get to, and most importantly how best to get there.

This might be achieved through:

- having a policy on marking, assessment and reporting which ensures that feedback is provided to teachers and students about progress in order to support future learning and informs necessary adjustments to teaching.
- sharing learning objectives with students
- sharing assessment criteria with students very early on in tasks, in a way which is easy for them to understand and is transparent for all.
- recognising the standards to aim for by showing students exemplars of work previously produced by other students.
- providing the basis for varied and effective feedback and development points for students to help them realise their potential by making them active partners in their own learning.
- developing students' questioning skills.
- developing students' self and peer assessment.
- promoting confidence among learners and being aware of students' preferred learning styles.
- providing experiences and activities that enable students to be involved in assessing and monitoring their own achievements.
- ensuring that assessment yields information that is useful in helping to improve teaching; helping teachers to get to know students and to plan work with appropriate pace and challenge.
- ensuring that assessment yields information that is useful in helping to improve learning; helping students and parents to understand how they learn best, and how well they have learned.

Assessment is of prime importance to staff to inform their future planning and activity with classes. We must recognise equally that it has a profound

influence on student motivation and self-esteem. Therefore it must show consideration and be both constructive and sensitive. Also our ability to share this information with parents effectively is key to students being supported as well as possible at home.

PROMOTING AND EVALUATING THE POLICY

This will be achieved and supported by:
- A firm commitment to improving teaching and learning for individuals, classes, the school and the wider community.
- The development and improvement of learning and teaching as the central component in the school improvement planning cycle.
- The use of mechanisms for continuing professional development (courses, coaching, inset, mentoring, training and so on) within the cycle and framework of performance management.
- The formal and informal monitoring systems which are already in place, augmented by lesson observation, peer observations, teacher planning scrutiny, work sampling, canvassing of staff and student views to inform the assessment of the following outcomes of effective learning:
  a. More connected knowledge – of things, people, action
  b. Greater complexity of understanding
  c. Wider range of skills and strategies
  d. Increased engagement and motivation
  e. A more reflective and self-directing approach to learning
  f. More positive emotions about and a greater affiliation to learning
  g. A sense of membership and participation in a learning community
  h. A greater facility for interacting and learning with others
  i. The promotion of oneself as a 'lifelong' learner

And most importantly…
   …the fun, sense of achievement and sheer enjoyment that learning brings.